

# Charitable Gaming **THE VIEW**



On-Line @ [www.cgao.ca](http://www.cgao.ca)

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## 936 – Revitalization of Charitable Bingo & Gaming

The *Revitalization of Charitable Bingo & Gaming* initiative continues to move forward at a tremendous pace. There still remains a vast amount of ground to be covered prior to going live with the first Bingo Centre, which then starts a long period of completing the conversion of thirty seven (37) sites who have expressed a desire to move forward under this exciting initiative.

We must always bear in mind what we are trying to achieve here under this program. This is about the *long-term transformation* of the Bingo Sector in this Province. The Bingo Sector has been under tremendous pressure from external competitive factors for the last 15 years. Unable to compete with the tools at hand, it had fallen behind other leisure/gaming experiences. As a result of the challenges and especially the Non-Smoking ban, the AGCO went about engaging the industry and in 2005, under the leadership of Mr. Jean Major (CEO-AGCO), launched a new platform - *Modernization of Charitable Gaming*.

This was the beginning of re-aligning the focus on to the '*customer experience*' and generating 'margin' for the primary stakeholders. This was innovative, bold and was facilitated within the legal framework. Further, this generated some new product innovation. A prime example was the Break Open 'Balls' Ticket, which breathed new life into that product line across the province. But what it was unable to achieve was new methods of delivery and technology.

Thus, with support of the Provincial Government, working in tandem with our Charity, Municipal and Crown Corporation (OLG) partners, we have forged this important *Revitalization* initiative. This initiative needs to focus on its *long-term objectives* while delivering, in stages, the changes that will be required to facilitate across the Industry, where

it has been agreed to move to this model. It does require new thinking and the ability to embrace change to see beyond the immediate phase and work to re-connect with the customer base, who remains the primary driver of the business as well as maximizing Funds for our Community based Charities.

We need everyone to understand that this initial stage is (at minimum) a five (5) year process to turn this ship around through new product, the introduction of technology, measured but continued investments in the facilities, heightened charity (community) awareness and a greater focus, understanding and commitment to customer *service & experience*.

#### **937 – Supplier Day – 7<sup>th</sup> March 2012**

On the 7<sup>th</sup> March 2012 the CGAO will be hosting a 'Supplier Day' at the Holiday Inn (Airport East) Dixon Road. This is an opportunity to *showcase* our Suppliers/Manufacturers range of products and how they contribute to the success of the Industry at large.

I am delighted to report that Mr. Ron Ko (Director – Charitable Gaming) is also using this venue to host the OLG (Bingo) New Product Committee Meeting and giving that group exposure to our Suppliers/Manufacturers.

I would encourage all our Members and Bingo Centre Managers to come along that day to see and share in this event.

#### **938 – Canadian Gaming Conference**

Please be advised that the next Canadian Gaming Conference is scheduled for 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> June 2012 in Niagara Falls, Ontario. There are an exciting range of topics that are targeted at Commercial Operators of Charitable Gaming and Members of this Association have been heavily engaged in the content for our Sector.

We would encourage Commercial Operators to be at the Conference and be actively involved in the discussions and workshops. We should also not forget the valuable opportunity to network with colleagues both from Ontario and across the country.

Further information can be obtained via this link:

<http://www.canadiangamingsummit.com/2012/Niagara.shtml>

#### **939 – Development Funds Update**

There are some very exciting developments that are currently under consideration in both Development Funds (Bingo & Break Open Tickets). Both these are reaching out to all elements of our Sector, either through Game Initiatives, Branding, Research and Training. They are, without doubt, of tremendous value to us all.

Both Funds are always looking to receive input from its contributors on suggestions you have in developing both business channels (Bingo & Break Open Tickets). If you have an idea, please place it down on paper and send it to our (CGAO) Administrator, Ms. Sandi Nesbitt at [nesbitt.s@sympatico.ca](mailto:nesbitt.s@sympatico.ca).

#### **940 – Bingo Centre - Security**

Just a reminder to all Bingo Centre Managers to review security procedures with your Bingo Centres, especially cash management processes. We need to co-ordinate this with our Charity Colleagues and ensure that they have heightened awareness of the need to keep cash in a safe place and out of view from customers.

There is a spate of robberies going on in Southern Ontario that is targeted at ATM Machines – especially those branded ‘*Direct Cash*’. It would be wise to contact your ATM supplier and obtain a status on your machines and if they are aware of any attempts in your area.

#### 941 – Troy Ross

It was announced in mid-January 2012 that Mr. Troy Ross would be leaving *Hill & Knowlton Canada*. Troy had been offered and has accepted a new senior position with the *Interactive Gaming Counsel (IGC)* as their Senior Canadian Advisor.

Troy has a tremendous depth and broad knowledge of the Gaming Sector both here in Canada and internationally and his continued engagement in the Gaming Industry is an asset to us all. On behalf of everyone at the CGAO, we wish him well in his new career opportunity.

Should you wish to contact Troy, he can be reached via [troyross@me.com](mailto:troyross@me.com)

#### 942 – Responsible Gaming – It’s Important

I wanted to take this moment once again to remind everyone of the importance of constructive engagement of *Responsible Gaming* practices and awareness in our Bingo Centres.

We should, as a matter of course, be embedding this into our culture as we go forward so it becomes second nature to everyone engaged in the Industry today.

I know when I visit Bingo Centres there is always material on display or available, which is a positive first step and I wish to compliment and encourage Bingo Managers to keep this up.

#### 943 – Rank Group PLC

##### *Interim Trading Results – 9<sup>th</sup> February 2012*

On Thursday, 9<sup>th</sup> February 2012 in London (UK), the Rank Group PLC released interim trading results ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011.

In an unsettled customer environment, the Group continued to deliver a strong performance across the majority of its business channels. In the case of the UK channels, their brands have increased both customer’s numbers, revenue and operating profit with a particularly strong performance from their Grosvenor’s ‘G’ Casinos. In mainland Europe, the business remains under pressure, especially in Spain which saw the introduction of non-smoking in public places.

The Group focus on delivering a *high quality entertainment experience* consistent with their brand values has led to this strong performance and connectively to their customer base. The Bingo and Casino divisions are genuine ‘*Multi-Channel Brands*’ with the ability to engage/connect with customers via licensed venues and online sites.

Rank has clearly made a commitment to understanding the customer both through *Insight & Segmentation* – this has been achieved through the collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative information of customer behaviours & preferences & informs the development of their Brands.

What is encouraging is the increase in the engagement of younger people, which has been steadily growing during the course of 2011. The investment in Brand concepts – Bingo ‘Full House’ and ‘G-Casinos’ is focused on delivering an exciting and entertaining experience to their customers.

As Rank now enters its 75<sup>th</sup> Year of trading, in my view it is still commanding a presence in the UK High Street, a stable of leading leisure brands and a solid leadership/management.

### Rank Group In Discussions

It was confirmed on the 30<sup>th</sup> January 2012 that Rank was in discussions to potentially acquire Gala Casinos from the Gala/Coral Group.

### 944 – Branding – Defining the Experience

On the 6<sup>th</sup> March 2012 the CGAO, in conjunction with Ron Ko's (OLG) Team, will meet and have a discussion and set out a foundation on *defining the customer experience*. How do we begin the process of beginning the various pillars of *ambience, products, service* and weld them together in a coherent fashion to maximize consistency of delivery to our customers.

The CGAO *Internal Working Committee* and Ron Ko's Team will be engaged in working together to flesh this out. This is an excellent example of the engagement policy of Ron Ko where he seeks constructive engagement by the Commercial Operator to ensure our direction and focus is aligned.

### 945 – Special Promotional Dates

As you will no doubt be aware there are two unique dates that will occur this year. The first is the 29<sup>th</sup> February 2012 – *leap year* and the last of twelve unique dates where the *day, the month and the year* align (12<sup>th</sup> December 2012 – 12-12-12). This offers a tremendous opportunity later in the year, especially around Christmas period.

As with all these things, an element of forward planning really helps to maximum the opportunity. I would once again remind everyone to leverage the resources of your Suppliers in planning these types of events.

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### 946 – Bingo Country Limited

You may be aware that on the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012, Bingo Country Limited undertook full operational control of its Ontario Bingo Centres, being *Sarnia, St. Thomas, Stratford and London*.

The Operational Management of the Company is headed up by two very experienced Operators, *Mr. Tony DiMaria and Mr. George Prue*. I have enclosed their direct e-mails if you wish to contact them directly.

Mr. Tony DiMaria - [tdimaria@bingo-country.ca](mailto:tdimaria@bingo-country.ca)  
Mr. George Prue - [gprue@bingo-country.ca](mailto:gprue@bingo-country.ca)

**947 – CGAO Office**

Please be advised that Ms. Sandi Nesbitt will be away for the remainder of the month. As such, the office will be closed. Sandi will be picking up e-mails but if you require immediate attention, please contact Peter McMahon direct at [mcmahon.pli@sympatico.ca](mailto:mcmahon.pli@sympatico.ca).

On-Line @ [www.cgao.ca](http://www.cgao.ca)

Information: Resources: Reference

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Commercial Gaming Association of Ontario